STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

UNDERSTANDING CRISIS DECISION MAKING

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LIEUTENANT COLONEL GEORGE E. MOORE
United States Army

USAWC CLASS OF 1996

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U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: George E. Moore (LTC), USA

TITLE: Understanding Crisis Decision Making

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 15 April 1996   PAGES: 27   CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

     Crises continue to confront the United States and her leaders, threatening a deliberate national strategy. An examination of both strategy and crisis finds a striking but balanced contrast; they are parallel in definition but opposed in outcome. Crisis therefore represents a breakdown of strategy, and decision makers focus on strategic ways in crises. Impediments to rational decision making occur in routine situations, but leaders must know if these constraints are intensified or mitigated in crises. Organizational process and governmental politics are two impediments that should be reduced in crisis as the threatened loss of high-value goals pushes aside personal differences, organizational parochialism and political bargaining. The reduction of these impediments in crisis remains more illusion than reality. Having relied on these two influences in deliberate planning and routine decisions, decision makers appear to reflexively use them in crisis as well. Belief systems serve as a foundation for an individual's perception of reality and prejudice rational decision making in both routine situations and crises. Crises shape and reinforce beliefs systems, subsequently swaying selection of courses of action in future crises. Crisis decision makers must understand these three deterrents to rationality and overcome them to successfully reach the envisioned strategic end.

Less than a decade ago, crisis in the Cold War between two nuclear superpowers carried the ominous threat of escalating conflict, use of nuclear weapons, and mutual self-destruction. The recent termination of the Cold War may mark the end of crises between world powers, but not the end of crises concerning terrorism, regional powers (as in the Far East and Southwest Asia), or the threatened safety of Americans in failed states abroad. The new world order more closely resembles disorder, and the increased deployment of the American military in this new world finds soldiers overseas faced with tactical decisions carrying international consequences. This problem is compounded as global news networks draw national and international attention to strategic dilemmas and intensify the pressure and timelines imposed upon national leaders in crisis.

Strategic decisions are required in crisis. In the 1995 National Military Strategy, crisis response is listed as a task of deterrence and conflict prevention, the second of three components of U.S. strategy. Crisis response as part of this strategy is depicted as just that - a response, or an answering back, using military forces. Such a categorization begs the question of whether the decision-making process will be used to determine the best course of action for the nation in its critical hour. Countless hours of scrutinized deliberate planning are involved in developing national security and military strategies. Is as much diligence involved in crisis planning? Can the "best" course of action consistently be found within such limitations? Under crisis conditions, decision makers consistently struggle to find the appropriate response that represents the best strategic interests of the nation.[1]

International events during the long Cold War provided rich opportunities to examine crisis decision making. The potential lessons learned should be invaluable in correcting

deficiencies in that process. The education process, in this regard, should probe the crisis-strategy relationship and the decision-making process. Crisis decisions must represent a continuation of strategy or an attempt to regain strategic goals.

The Cold War period coincided with scholarly advancements in understanding decision-making behavior. Theoretical and applied models emerged as springboards for understanding how leaders make decisions in crisis and deliberate planning.[2] Those models have not been flawless as crises and strategy collide. This paper will examine crisis as a breakdown of strategy, evaluating crisis impact upon a model of rational choice and upon three models that constrain rationality even in deliberate strategy. These insights will serve as a modest attempt to understand impediments that will challenge leaders as they attempt to keep the strategic helm steady during crises that are sure to come.

Strategy - The Rational Combination of Ends, Ways, and Means

In the nineteenth century, Moltke termed strategy "the practical adaptation of the means placed at a general's disposal to the attainment of the object in view".[3] This idea of adapting means connotes a dual-faceted - "what do you have?" and "how do you use it?" - decision for the leader. Yet strategy must be more than a plan. Strategy, according to Moltke, also requires an attainable goal, i.e. the object in view. The U.S. Army War College builds on Moltke's definition and incorporates these concepts to express strategy as the combination of ends (objectives towards which one strives) and ways (courses of action) and means (resources or instruments by which some end can be achieved).[4] This military equation for strategy, the sum of ends, ways and means, is taught with application to the three

levels of war (strategic, operational and tactical).

At the national security level, this equation applies with the incorporation of the ways and means of American political, economic, psychological, and military powers to achieve national objectives or ends.[5] The formulation of national security strategy involves identifying national interests, translating interests into objectives, and determining coherent ways to achieve those objectives within the existing means of American power. Each of these steps requires a decision-making process, and the most common portrayal of decision making is one that interprets action as rational choice.[6]

Rational choice theories assume an ideal model in which all necessary and accurate information is available to the decision maker, all reasonable alternatives are interpreted and evaluated in terms of their expected consequences, and a course of action (COA) is then selected that maximizes or optimizes consequential return for the decision maker.[7] In other words, a course of action is chosen that will most likely, most efficiently and most cost-effectively attain the decision-maker's objective. The strengths and merits of this rational actor model are in its simplicity and in its appeal to human nature. Cost/return comparisons and analysis, decision trees, and points assigned to prospective COAs are examples of methods used to pursue rational choice. Such methodology is common in America where decisions often receive public circumspection and where the use and pursuit of rationality are rewarded in society, whether in business, politics or the military. Although all decision makers are imperfect creatures, they attempt to be rational in thought and action in ends-ways-means relationships.

Pure rationality, however, strains credulity as a description of how strategic decisions

actually happen. In spite of the decision maker's best intentions and efforts at rationality,

decisions by strategic leaders are subject to several constraints:

> (1) the political actor's information about situations with which he must deal is usually incomplete; (2) his knowledge of ends-means relationships is generally inadequate to predict reliably the consequences of choosing one or another course of action; and (3) it is often difficult for him to formulate a single criterion by means of which to choose which alternative approach is "best."[8]

Certainly in deliberate strategic planning, these constraints are reduced. The decision

maker and the organization may act in a unified manner according to a well-known and well-

defined list of priorities. The possibility of collecting information on available alternatives is

generally not limited by time constraints. The decision maker also has enough time and other

means to better evaluate the different options and probabilities as to the impact of the

decision and possible second and third order effects. In crises, however, time and often

information are severely limited. To counter this, the information age rapidly brings

megabytes of data to the fingertips and screens of anyone desiring to reduce the knowledge

deficit. These new systems, however, can generate so much information that a defect may

occur in its proper utilization.[9] As any of these constraints intensify during crises, the greater

is the probability that the decision maker will not make an empirically rational choice.

Yet if strategy is a product of the rational consideration of ends, ways and means, then

crisis decision making in the execution of strategy should surely be rational also. The innate

importance of crises in national security should demand that the rational cry of "what is best"

dominate. This cry, however, is rarely heard in historical examples of crises. In 1914, the

assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian-Hungarian throne, by a Serbian

nationalist began a series of international crisis decisions that had devastating consequences.

4

Sequential crisis responses of several nations were the strategic decisions to mobilize their military forces. Less than six weeks after Ferdinand's murder and only seven days after a "minor" war had broken out between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, every major power in Europe was at war. Rational thought undoubtedly rejects an assumption that war was embraced in the deliberate national strategies of so many countries at the beginning of 1914.[10]

Strategy is the calculated sum of ends, ways, and means; but that calculation was largely absent in the crisis of 1914 as European elites chose courses of action that produced, to say the least, a less-than-desirable end. When fighting finally stopped in November 1918, Austria-Hungary was in dissolution, Germany was on the edge of civil war, the Bolshevik revolution had destroyed the Russian monarchy, and France and Great Britain had emerged among the victors, but at a frightful cost.

Crisis - The Antithesis to Strategy

The original meaning of crisis comes from a Greek medical analogy of a "turning point",

> ... a decisive moment in the patient's illness when he or she would irredeemably take a turn for the better or for the worse within a relatively short period of time. The Greek root word means decision, from the root verb meaning to decide. ... A crisis is a critical point, a decisive moment which denotes the favorable or unfavorable outcome: life or death, violence or non-violence, resolution or protracted conflict.[11]

The general Greek approach notwithstanding, modern literature on the subject is replete with a wide variety of definitions that make it difficult to find a commonly agreed upon basis for a template for evaluating a situation. By and large, crisis definitions differ in terms of the dimensions they identify as empirically necessary for a situation to be perceived

as a crisis.[12] One definition, that has withstood scrutiny for over two decades and contains

some of the properties frequently associated with crisis, specifies that a crisis is a situation

that (1) threatens high priority goals of the decision-making unit, (2) surprises the members of

the decision-making unit by its occurrence, and (3) restricts the amount of time available for

response before the decision is transformed.[13] More simply stated, a crisis can be considered

as an unanticipated situation of severe threat and short decision time.

Based upon the first criterion of this definition, situations become crises when they

concern values identified by the threatened decision makers as significant. Although a violent

or potentially violent situation is often implied in the ordinary use of the term "crisis",

personal safety is not the singular value at risk. The kinds of national values that might be

threatened include military security (immediate and long-range), asserted universal principles

of international order, regional stability and integrity, and international political influence or

support.[14]

The second element of this definition of crisis is awareness or surprise.[15] When the

Soviets erected fencing in Berlin on Sunday 13 August 1961 to seal the East German border

in the city, American officials were stymied because there were no contingency plans relevant

to the situation that had arisen. "Why, with all those plans," an exasperated President

Kennedy demanded of his Berlin Task Force, "do you never have the one for what

happens?"[16] Because the situation in question was not anticipated, the mandate before the

American decision-makers was to develop the most appropriate course of action in response

to the crisis. Berlin also illustrates that the unexpected occurrence of a crisis does not mean

that leaders are usually ignorant of events progressing to the crisis. The increased flow of

East German refugees in Berlin was a matter of general concern to allied leaders throughout the summer of 1961; nevertheless as subsequent events demonstrated, even if the general situation is anticipated, plans may not be developed which can be executed within new time constraints imposed by the developing crisis.

The third definitional criterion is decision time. Crises involve a relatively short time in which to decide to act before loss to values will occur. The notion of time is also related to uncertainty about the adversary or the information available. The important point is that time in this sense is relative; it is the perception of time that matters. Perceived rather than actual time pressure creates the feeling of a time limit in which a decision has to be taken.[17]

An additional factor integral to the concept of crisis but not always included in its definition is psychological stress. A crisis may be regarded as a type of stress-producing stimulus with multiple ramifications on an individual's (and group's) decision-making process. Corresponding to the three criteria in the crisis definition, three associated stressors are (1) the threat of value loss, (2) pressure to innovate in problem solving since no programmed decision or exact contingency plan exists, and (3) pressure to decide relatively quickly.[18]

These crisis criteria and associated stressors compose a balanced contrast to the components of strategy, parallel in definition but opposed in outcome. Crisis therefore represents a failure of strategy - a failure of its parts and a failure of the sum. Strategic ends are based upon objectives or goals that have value, whereas crises threaten the goals or objectives of the decision makers. Strategic ways are concepts or courses of action employed to achieve the desired ends, whereas crises surprise the decision makers who have no definitive course of action. Strategic means are resources to be applied toward the objective,

whereas crises unexpectedly constrain the valuable resource of time. This time constraint may also effectively limit the physical means that might be applied toward crisis resolution. Crisis can therefore be considered an antithesis of strategy - the potential failure or loss of strategic ends and ways and means.

Although all three strategic components are threatened, leaders faced with crisis do not necessarily spend time addressing each of these three elements equally. In crisis decision making, there is the tendency to decide how, or in what manner, to counter the perceived threat. National leaders are therefore inherently focused on deciding a *course of action*, or "what do we do now?". These leaders recognize there are many things they could do, but the dominant question concerns what they should do. The envisioned course of action (COA) may require innovation in order to maintain the original strategic goal or objective, or the course of action may result in a change of objective or desired end. But the national security strategy or national military strategy of the United States is designed to protect America's vital interests. Since it is unlikely that an evaluation of the crisis threat will lead to a devaluation of American objectives and since time constraints will likely not allow any significant increase in means, the decision makers usually must find a new way to retain (or obtain) their original goal.

Ways - Formulation and Decisions on Courses of Action

National military and civilian leaders search in crises for appropriate courses of action, pursuing through rational choice the "best" decision possible. The pure or ideal model of rational choice, as has been demonstrated, specifies that all possible alternatives are presented,

alternatives are considered on their merits and, after conscious calculation, selection is made of the alternative that maximizes the goal. The search for alternatives and a rational solution is a critical component in crisis decision making; yet this search for an appropriate course of action is difficult, time-consuming, intense and potentially flawed, even in matters of national security.

In both crisis and deliberate planning, decision groups (and often subordinate groups) frequently "brainstorm" to creatively generate alternative courses of action while postponing evaluation until after the time of idea generation. Notwithstanding the merits of this method, influence and participation biases that derive from the personalities or status of the group members can inhibit a full offering of ideas. Moral courage, so-called intestinal fortitude, and ethics may interplay within the communications dynamics, while participants wonder if the one who rebels will be retained. Robert McNamara, originally perceived by President Lyndon Johnson as a team player, was removed as Secretary of Defense by Johnson after McNamara began to oppose the American military involvement in Vietnam. In a similar manner, consensus building, groupthink, and even a zero-defect mentality can threaten initiative required to formulate strategic ways.[19]

Although the requirements for perfect rationality are never met, decision makers will often describe their own behavior as the result of a rational decision-making process. Some past crisis decisions demonstrate elements of this idealized process. Upon the intelligence discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba in October 1962, for instance, President Kennedy charged his crisis decision-making group to "set aside all other tasks to make a prompt and intensive survey of the dangers and all possible courses of action."[20] After extensive

discussion and debate, six options were ultimately identified: do nothing; exert diplomatic pressure; make a secret approach to the Cuban leader Fidel Castro; invade Cuba; launch a surgical air strike against Cuba; and blockade Cuba. Agreeing that removal of the missiles was the goal, the group evaluated the presumed advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. The group recommended and the President chose to execute the blockade of Cuba, the option that best afforded flexibility and demonstration of U.S. resolve.[21]

President Bush's conclusion to send a sizable military force to the Middle East following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 is another example of a crisis decision that demonstrates apparent conformity to rational choice. Bush and his advisors discussed uses of the diplomatic, economic and military elements of power, as well as the risk of doing nothing. The President's decision to mount a military response, supported by diplomatic and economic measures, ultimately led to a multinational defensive and offensive effort that forced Iraq out of Kuwait.[22]

The criticality of formulating alternatives in a crisis is balanced by the criticality of selecting the "best" course of action.[23] Clearly, the characteristics of crisis situations provide a strong impetus for the decision maker to move toward a rational actor "what is best" approach in the formulation of ways and the ultimate choice of a specific course of action. Nevertheless, less-than-optimal decisions for crisis resolution often result from influences and constraints posed by organizational paradigms, governmental politics and the decision maker's belief systems.[24]

A. Organizational Paradigms

Just as organizations are headed by decision-making leaders, leaders are part of their own organization with whatever benefits and baggage that brings with it. The organizational process influences the decision maker, in crises or routine situations, by raising the problem to the highest level and by providing the information for the evaluation of alternatives.[25]

The important question is whether this encompassing organizational process is intensified or mitigated in going from routine to crisis situations. Organizational perspectives will influence decisions in crisis, as well as in deliberate planning, with organizational doctrine or standard operating procedures (SOPs) normally serving as the foundation for action. Military officers, for instance, are schooled in the organizational doctrine of their particular service, thus an Army commander should generally employ the tenets of Field Manual (FM) 100-5, "Operations", in response to crisis on the battlefield. Formal schooling in joint doctrine occurs later in the officer's career and may remain subordinate to service doctrine. Repeated emphasis and use of joint doctrine during assignments to joint staffs diminishes the organizational paradigms of the service component but does not necessarily decrease the ingraining of a military perspective toward problem solving.

Military paradigms are an inhibition to creative thinking during both routine situations and crises. Service perspectives themselves run counter to each other, as in matters addressed by the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee (JROC). Conventional wisdom holds that the concept of jointness will change or at least replace the service's organizational paradigms and begin to break their hold which restricts the rational handling of ends, ways and means. This belief may be valid but is far from fulfillment, as illustrated in Operation Desert Storm when

11

failure to fully integrate aviation assets of the land and air components contributed to the escape of two enemy divisions.[26]

Crises ideally drive decision makers toward an integrated solution, or "jointness", compelling leaders to move past organizational parochialism. The threat to high value goals, such as national security, should necessitate the setting aside of such differences. But this compulsion must also pervade the entire organization, reaching those charged with the execution of the optimal course of action. This was also a problem for the military during the Gulf War. The rational decision by the CENTAF and NAVCENT commanders to reduce the restrictive beyond visual range rules of engagement was never fully implemented due to concerns and subsequent inertia within the two component staffs.[27] In this instance, key leaders were able to reduce the constraint of organizational paradigms, but subordinates could not overcome the same limitation.

Rational consideration of strategic ways is also influenced by an understanding of the organizational process affecting other international actors. Intelligence is gathered on governments, political bodies, and factions so that informed choices can be made in matters of international policy. Nations with organizational components perform actions such that the most reliable prediction of what a nation will do tomorrow is what its organizations are doing today. This reference pattern is used to make intelligence estimates. Sovietology, for example, postulated Soviet actions as outputs of organizations, such as the Politburo, functioning according to standard patterns. Explanation of an organization's action starts at least from this baseline.

The characteristic lack of information in crises further hinders the decision makers

from moving beyond this baseline knowledge of the challenger's organization, however incomplete it may be. Simply put, the inability to characterize or understand an opponent's organizational patterns renders the crisis decision maker incapable of making a truly rational decision. Without crucial information, decision makers are often constrained to fall back on existing conceptions from their own organizations. Leaders may develop strategic ways from plans that are "on the shelf", hopelessly guided by the paucity of information available regarding the antagonist, unable to conceive more crucial courses of action.

B. Governmental Politics

A second impediment to rational decision making is what has come to be termed the governmental politics model. Just as national governments are complex organizational interactions between and among federal agencies, the political model demonstrates that the reality of power is that it is shared, the outcome of bargaining games among players within the government.[28] Within the military, for example, this bargaining occurred between air component commanders in allocating targets during Desert Shield.[29]

At the highest level, individuals interpret national interests differently, as noted by ongoing discussion on vital American interests and U.S. military involvement in the former Yugoslavia, and will choose different ways and means to exercise the elements of power in national strategy. The nature of problems in both international and national policy does permit fundamental disagreement among reasonable men concerning what ought to be done. In crises, however, this model should have reduced utility because national leaders are more likely to be drawn together in a common stand which overrides their governmental interests

13

and negates bargaining tendencies.

This type of stand during crises, however, is often more illusion than reality. When confronted with the Cambodian seizure of the SS *Mayaguez* and its crew, Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger disagreed with Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger in National Security Council meetings over the degree of force required to accomplish goals already agreed upon. The Secretary of State, supported by Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs Lt. Gen. Scowcroft, wanted to use B-52s. The Secretary of Defense, supported by Acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Jones, conversely did not want any air strikes. Kissinger, however, dominated Presidential access and had already influenced the flow of crisis information; yet Schlesinger was better positioned to control military operations. President Ford ultimately ordered a compromise decision to employ tactical air strikes but no B-52s. During the execution, nevertheless, Schlesinger chose to limit the number of strikes against Cambodia.[30] The course of action chosen in this crisis was ideally the calculated linkage between strategic means and ends. It was, in fact, the direct outcome of political bargaining.

Just as governmental politics influence rational crisis decision making among American's leaders, political bargaining can likewise occur within other nations' governments. The capability to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of possible courses of action is limited when opposing moves on the world chessboard are not made by a wholly rational or unitary actor. Before Khrushchev's overthrow in 1964, for instance, Western scholars believed he wielded the same unlimited power as his predecessors. It was over a decade later before analysis disclosed that Soviet actions during the 1961 Berlin crisis were commonly

based on Kremlin politics, part of an intense power struggle within the Soviet leadership.[31]

The loss of a common foe, i.e. the Soviet Union with its military force and communist ideology, may actually cause an increased influence of politics in crisis decision making. This influence may be exerted not only intranationally but also internationally. The increased use of regional alliances, United Nations-sponsored groupings and *ad hoc* coalitions, of which the United States is often seen as a major participant, strongly influences strategic decisions. The conversion of inconsistent partnerships into teams by aligning preferences and interests is extremely difficult and may not be complete when confronted with a crisis. Military strategic leaders increasingly involved in coalition warfare may make crisis decisions based on what the coalition will "allow". During Desert Storm, General Schwarzkopf was confronted with the Marines and Saudis closing rapidly on Kuwait City, while the pan-Arab corps - the force designated to liberate Kuwait City in the coalition plan - was still back at the border. Schwarzkopf had to consider the strategic implications of altering the flow of the campaign, the associated risk of Iraqi forces escaping from Kuwait City, and the regional and international ramifications of the Americans surging ahead of the Arabs to liberate the Kuwaiti capital.[32]

C. Belief Systems or "If triangles had a god, he would have three sides"[33]

There is no such thing as context-free decision making. All judgments and decisions rest on the way decision makers see and interpret the world. Decision makers tend, like everybody else, to organize their thoughts and perceptions of reality in terms of cultural values and meanings, as well as personal interests and motivation. In general, belief systems

are thought of as entrenched sets of perspectives, some interrelated and some not, which organize and order an individual's perceptual environment.[34] They are a reality of decision making.

Crises should reduce the hindrances of organizational behavior and governmental politics to a rational search for what is best. But as has been demonstrated, this is rarely the case. This is equally true in an examination of how crises alter the influence of belief systems on decision making. Although the unexpected nature of a crisis may highlight fallacies in held beliefs, more often a crisis seems to reinforce fledgling beliefs or suspicions that then govern course-of-action selection in subsequent crises. Kissinger's actions during the *Mayaguez* crisis appear consistently influenced by existing beliefs. He expected the United States to be tested by its adversaries, and he feared that America would lack the will to respond. He believed that weak, indecisive, and disorganized U.S. reaction to an earlier provocation by North Korea reaped only demoralized friends and emboldened adversaries.[35]

Images dependent on the decision maker's own beliefs may or may not be accurate representations of "reality" and may detract from rationality due to stereotyping, incomplete information, or misinformation.[36] By 1945, as an example, Churchill strongly differed from Roosevelt in his distrust of the Soviets and believed that the Soviet Army should not be allowed to gain a toehold in central Europe. The evolution of the Cold War later proved Churchill's beliefs the more accurate.

In a similar manner, Kissinger's beliefs during the *Mayaguez* crisis led to a proposed crisis response that demonstrated resolve and was in fact designed to influence international beliefs about America. Thus, although the crisis threatened American strategy, the search for

16

a rational course of action was predicated on an understanding of the beliefs of other world actors. The paradoxical consequence is that, while belief systems of the decision-maker often detract from pure rationality, understanding those of an opponent can contribute to rationality. Anything approaching rational U.S. crisis response in the Cold War, for example, would have required a comprehension that the Soviets often viewed it safe for them to pursue major objectives at the expense of a stronger adversary. As in the Berlin blockade of 1948-49, the Soviets often saw potential to pursue far-reaching objectives through limited conflict with the United States.[37]

Conclusion

Strategy, the calculated sum of ends, ways, and means, exemplifies a purposeful process with fully rational intent. The deliberate consideration by intelligent leaders of objectives, courses of action and available resources should therefore be in pursuit of the highest good for the nation and its people. Crises, however, embody the antithesis of strategy and violate each of the strategic components via threats, surprise and constraints.

Crisis decision makers are compelled to focus on courses of action as a natural recourse as they attempt to employ available means to attain strategic objectives. The ideal leader considers a viable course of action, its implementation, and its second- and third-order effects. This means that courses of action, or strategic ways, must not only be actively considered toward the physical development of an approved plan, but ways that are not implemented must also remain open topics of professional discussion, no matter how difficult and no matter how far outside the box.

17

In order to develop national response options, military officers should learn to apply critical and creative thinking skills to produce rational COAs that will lead to crisis resolution. The uncertainty in the new international era will demand new and innovative ways of using the nation's elements of power to resolve crises. There is an intellectual mandate to break the current paradigms, or think "out of the box". Prior to the erection of the Berlin wall, the concept of sealing the city down the middle was one that most officials found unrealistic. At least one American official, however, believed it to be a rational solution. This officer commented with remarkable foresight, "If you think a wall is the least likely option, then that is where I place my bet, because we've never outguessed the Soviets yet."[38] If creative thinking was difficult in a bipolar world, how much more difficult will this process be in dealing with failed states, ethnic conflicts, religious militancy, or terrorist threats of weapons of mass destruction?

Purely rational decision making is an ideal that is, by definition, never attainable. Even in deliberate decision making, the complexity of national security issues in the present global setting renders elusive anything even approaching the ideal model. In crisis situations, the perception of rationality may be reinforced on the part of the decision maker. But this perception is false. In reality, the characteristics of crises are antithetical to the rational calculation of ends and means which is the essence of strategy. Hindrances to pure rationality ranging from organizations and politics to belief systems are in fact magnified in the move from deliberative to crisis decision making.

All this is a salient lesson of the Cold War, even as international relations today confronts U.S. leaders with problems not anticipated during that lengthy struggle. The

18

characteristics of crises have not changed. Neither has the counterintuitive, antithetical nature of the relationship between crises and the concept of strategy. National leaders need a constant reminder of this relationship if crisis decision making in the future is ever to approach the rationality that underlies strategy.

ENDNOTES

1. A study of presidential decision making during nineteen international crises since World War II, relating quality of process to outcome, is presented in Gregory M. Herek, Irving L. Janis, and Paul Huth, "Decision Making During International Crises," Journal of Conflict Resolution 31, no.2 (1987): 203-226. For a critique of that studied relationship, see David A. Welch, "Crisis Decision Making Reconsidered," Journal of Conflict Resolution 33, no.3 (1989): 430-445. For a brief summary from literature review that identifies deficiencies of government decision-making systems, see Arnold L. Horelick, A. Ross Johnson, and John D. Steinbruner, The Study of Soviet Foreign Policy: A Review of Decision-Theory-Related Approaches. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1973), 23-24.

2. Three conceptual models in crisis decision-making behavior to be used in this paper were proposed in Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1971), 4-7.

3. B.H. Liddell Hart, Strategy (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 334.

4. Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., "Toward an Understanding of Military Strategy", in Military Strategy: Theory and Application, ed. Arthur F. Lykke, Jr. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College, 1993), 3.

5. This concept is expressed in the definition of national (grand) strategy in Department of Defense, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, JCS Publication 1 (Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 1 June 1987), 232.

6. Most decision/crisis analysts, and virtually all economists, hold rationality as the traditional theory of decision making, as found in Ben D. Mor, Decision and Interaction in Crisis (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 7-8; Janis, 13; Christopher Jon Lamb, Belief Systems and Decision Making in the *Mayaguez* Crisis (Gainesville, FL: The University of Florida Press, 1989), 37-38; and Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short, and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978), 7.

7. The concept of rationality and the assumptions of this ideal model are discussed in Sidney Verba, "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System", in International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 224-231.

8. Alexander George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making." International Studies Quarterly 13, no.2 (1969): 197-198.

9. The problem of too much information "noise" predates the current information age in its implications on national security. The inability to correctly interpret available information,

over fifty years ago, concerning Japanese intentions to attack Pearl Harbor is highlighted in Gordon W. Prange, <u>At Dawn We Slept,</u> (New York: McGraw Hill, 1981), 474-482; Roberta Wohlstetter, <u>Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision,</u> (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962), 382-386; and Kenneth E. Roberts, <u>Lessons of Strategic Surprise: Pearl Harbor, Cuba and the 1973 Middle East Crisis,</u> (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1974), 1-4.

10. For an excellent discussion of the futile search in 1914 for alternatives to war in Europe, see Ole R. Holsti, <u>Crisis, Escalation, War,</u> (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), 143-168. The plausibility that World War I was not inadvertent, but was a result of rational choice, is briefly discussed with several cited references in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, <u>World Politics: Trend and Transformation</u> (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 78.

11. Jonathan M. Roberts, <u>Decision Making during International Crises</u> (New York: St. Martin's, 1988), 10.

12. A brief review of some proposed definitions is given in Mor, 3-4.

13. Charles F. Hermann, "International Crisis as a Situational Variable", in <u>International Politics and Foreign Policy,</u> ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 414.

14. Glenn D. Paige, "Comparative Case Analysis of Crisis Decisions: Korea and Cuba", in <u>International Crisis: Insights from Behavioral Research,</u> ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), 53.

15. The requirement for surprise as a component of the definition of crisis is not universally supported, although Charles Hermann's definition has been widely accepted in crisis research literature. For an alternative definition dropping the requirement of surprise, see Michael Brecher, "Towards a Theory of International Crisis Behavior: A Preliminary Report" in <u>International Studies Quarterly,</u> 21, no.1 (1977): 43-44. Other authors conclude that surprise can be reduced, but not eliminated, as an element of crisis, as in Head, *et al*, 35-36.

16. Norman Gelb, <u>The Berlin Wall</u> (New York: Times Books, 1986), 179.

17. Most crisis evaluations discuss time pressure and its negative influence on decision making. Discussion of perceived time pressure is also included in Holsti, 14-17, and J. Roberts, 60-61.

18. Thomas W. Milburn, "The Management of Crises", in <u>International Crises: Insights from Behavior Research,</u> ed. Charles F. Hermann (New York: The Free Press, 1972), 262. Stress and the influence of psychological tendencies are also discussed in Gregory F. Intoccia, "Critical Thinking in International Crises," <u>Military Review</u> (October 1990): 31-40.

19. Ways to prevent groupthink are enumerated in Irving L. Janis, Groupthink (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), 260-276. For specific methods to improve idea generation, see J. Edward Russo and Paul J.H. Schoemaker Decision Traps: Ten Barriers to Brilliant Decision Making and How to Overcome Them (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 152, and Scott Plous, The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 212.

20. Theodore C. Sorenson, Kennedy (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 675.

21. The original analysis of rationality in defining the six options and the choice of blockade is from Allison, 56-62.

22. The analysis of Presidential actions leading to Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm is taken from a discussion of policy making as rational choice in Kegley and Wittkopf, 47-49.

23. The study of this phenomenon in judgment, problem solving, and decision making encompasses both art and science in the search for rationality. Researchers and practitioners from political science, social psychology, experimental psychology, and management science, as well as economics and mathematics, all contribute ideas and theories. Terms such as decision theory, game theory, and behavioral decision theory, denote distinctive yet sometimes overlapping concepts and models in decision making. To simplify, there basically exist two bodies of observations - (1) what a rational person ideally does [called the normative model] and (2) what the individual really does [called the descriptive model]. For a compilation of the definitions of these and other theories, as well as associated terms, see Barry F. Anderson, Donald H. Deane, Kenneth R. Hammond, et al, Concepts in Judgment and Decision Research, (New York: Praeger, 1981).

24. Three of these approaches, i.e. rational policy, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics were introduced in a crisis case study in Allison, 4-7. For a recent analysis of these approaches as theoretical models, see Jonathan Bandor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," American Political Science Review 86, no.2 (1992): 301-322. Belief systems as a separate means of examining a case study are the subject of the cited work by Lamb.

25. This organizational process model was proposed and described in Allison, 67-100.

26. This analysis, which highlighted service mistrust between the Army and Air Force, is in P. Mason Carpenter, Joint Operations in the Gulf War: An Allison Analysis, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1995), 55-67.

27. Ibid, 11-20.

28. This model as a deterrent to rationality was originally presented and described as governmental (or bureaucratic) politics in Allison, 144-184.

29. For a discussion of the bargaining behavior between the Commander, Central Command Air Forces, and the Commander, 1st Marine Air Wing, see Carpenter, 32-33.

30. Schlesinger's decision to forego a fourth set of air strikes probably assisted Ford by reducing political charges of inproportionality of force. For a discussion of Kissinger's and Schlesinger's interaction and possible personal ramifications, see Lamb, 206-219.

31. An extensive analysis of the struggle for power in the Kremlin during this period is the focus of Robert M. Slusser in The Berlin Crisis of 1961 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). For summarized case studies of Soviet decisionmaking in other crises, see Horelick, 44-47.

32. This dilemma, Schwarzkopf's considerations, and the outcome can be found in H. Norman Schwarzkopf, It Doesn't Take a Hero (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 456-465.

33. Attributed to Montesquieu, in John Bartlett, comp., Familiar Quotations (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1980), 341.

34. Alexander George defined two sets of beliefs, instrumental and philosophical, concerning the nature of politics and political action by the term "operational code" in George, 197-200. He purports in this work that knowledge of an actor's "operational code" provides one of the most important inputs needed for analyses of political decision-making and leadership styles. For dangers associated with stereotyping political adversaries through belief systems, see Ole R. Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study", in International Politics and Foreign Policy ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 543-550.

35. Kissinger's reflections on, and conclusions about, the 1969 U.S. response to the North Korean downing of a USAF EC-121 can be found in Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979), 316-321. For an evaluation of the influence of Kissinger's belief system on his actions during the Mayaguez crisis, see Lamb, 172-175.

36. The contrast between perception and misperception intimates that international conflict frequently is not between states but rather between distorted images of states, as suggested in Quincy Wright, "Design for a Research Project on International Conflict and the Factors Causing Their Aggravation or Amelioration." Western Political Quarterly 10 (1957): 266.

37. The Bolshevik and Soviet evaluation of risk as part of their operational codes, with a view of limiting the means employed rather than the objective itself, is discussed in George, 212-215.

38. Gelb, 193.

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